

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 03096 301114Z
ACTION SS-25

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O R 301025Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8209
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USUN NEW YORK 888

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 3096

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SOPN, PEPR, SY, LE, US
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S INTERVIEW IN "MIDDLE EAST"

REF: (A) STATE 136043, (B) STATE 135710, (C) DAMASCUS 3055

1. GAVE MFA DIRECTOR OF AMERICAN AFFAIRS SIAGE INITIAL GUIDANCE ON YOUNG INTERVIEW CONTAINED REF B ON MAY 27. SIAGE MADE NO REPLY EXCEPT TO SAY HE WOULD INCLUDE IT IN HIS REPORT TO FONMIN KHADDAM ON SUBJECT.

2. AT CLOSE OF MY MEETING WITH KHADDAM MAY 28, KHADDAM RAISED SUBJECT OF INTERVIEW COMMENTING THAT IT WAS "VERY, VERY BAD. THE UNITED STATES IS TREATING US VERY BADLY." WHEN I ASSURED MINISTER THAT CERTAIN POINTS IN INTERVIEW REFLECTED ONLY AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S PERSONAL VIEWPOINT, KHADDAM INTERRUPTED THAT AMBASSADORS SPEAKING IN PUBLIC DO NOT HAVE PERSONAL VIEWPOINTS. A RUNAWAY HORSE MUST BE REINED IN OR GOTTEN RID OF, KHADDAM SNAPPED. HE SAID THAT SYRIA WAS THINKING OF
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LAUNCHING A PRESS CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE YOUNG INTERVIEW. I URGED AGAINST THIS COURSE NOTING THAT US POLICY HAD CLEARLY AND CONSISTENTLY FAVORED RAPID AND COMPLETE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM SOUTH LEBANON.

3. SINCE KHADDAM HAD RAISED MATTER AND HAD OBVIOUSLY NOT BEEN FULLY SATISFIED BY OUR INITIAL ASSURANCES. I FURNISHED SIAGE

WITH ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE REF A ON MAY 30. HE PROMISED TO BRING IT TO THE MINISTER' ATTENTION. HE AGAIN EXPRESSED GREATER INTEREST IN READING FULL TEXT OF INTERVIEW AND WE PROMISED IT TO HIM AS SOON AS EMBASSY RECEIVES IT. SIAGE SAID PRESS CAMPAIGN IN SYRIA WAS STILL A POSSIBILITY AFTER INTERVIEW APPEARED ON NEWSSTANDS.

4. SYRIAN PRESS HAS NOT AS YET PAID MUCH ATTENTION TO INTERVIEW. ONLY MENTION SO FAR HAS BEEN ASSERTION IN MOHAMED MANSOUR'S EDITORIAL IN MAY 29 AL-BAATH THAT ISRAEL AND OTHER PARTIES ARE ATTEMPTING TO PUT OFF WITHDRAWAL DATE AND TO PERPETRATE ISRAELI OCCUPATION OF EXTREME SOUTH. "AN INDICATION OF THIS WAS STATEMENT BY AMERICA'S UN REPRESENTATIVE YOUNG THAT 'LEBANON DOES NOT WANT ISRAEL TO PULL BACK PROMPTLY FROM SOUTERN LEBANON,'" EDITORIAL STATED. IT WENT ON TO SAY SYRIA WAS AWARE OF THE GRAVITY AND DIMENSION OF THE PLOT AND WAS DETERMINED TO DEFEAT ANY ATTEMPT TO DISRUPT LEBANESE PEACE PROCESS.
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Message Attributes

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